Four hidden matriarchs of psychoanalysis: The relationship of Lou von Salome, Karen Horney, Sabina Spielrein and Anna Freud to Sigmund Freud

Jerry Aldridge, Jennifer L. Kilgo* and Grace Jepkemboi

University of Alabama Birmingham, United Kingdom

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Sigmund Freud is considered the father and founder of psychoanalysis; however, numerous women contributed to its development and practice. Lou von Salome, Karen Horney, Sabina Spielrein and Anna Freud were instrumental in forming one of the leading psychological theories of the 20th century. Although the implications of each woman’s work are different, they individually made a unique impact on the development and practice of psychoanalysis in specific ways. Lou von Salome contributed much to the development of psychoanalysis through the arts, as she was a prolific writer and novelist. Karen Horney eventually broke with Freud and developed her own version of psychoanalysis, incorporating feminine psychology and criticizing the phallocentric and patriarchal nature of Freud’s theories. Sabina Spielrein contributed the “death instinct” to psychoanalysis, although Freud did not credit her fully for this development. Anna Freud, the youngest child of Sigmund and Martha Freud, was the founder of psychoanalytic child psychology along with Melanie Klein. She focused on the ego in childhood and ways to encourage its healthy development. Although each matriarch of psychoanalysis extended the ideas and theories of Sigmund Freud, they have not been given the credit they deserved.

Key words: Psychoanalysis, women, history, mothers.

INTRODUCTION

The field of psychoanalysis began as a male dominated profession and from a decidedly masculine viewpoint (Paris, 1994). Freud’s contempt for women was explicitly expressed in many of his publications. For example, Freud (1925) reported that women have the “hope of someday obtaining a penis in spite of everything” (p. 196). He continued, “I cannot escape the notion (though I hesitate to give it expression) that for woman the level of what is ethically normal is different from what it is in men…We must not allow ourselves to be deflected from such conclusions by the denials of the feminists, who are anxious to force us to regard the two sexes as completely equal in position and worth” (p. 197).

Despite the male-dominated influences on the field of psychoanalysis, there are volumes of psychoanalytic theory and research by women. Jane Sayers (1991) described in detail four mothers of psychoanalysis, two of which appear in this article. Helene Deutsch and Melanie Klein have been described as founding mothers, but there were numerous others (Paris, 1994). Lou von Salome, Karen Horney, Sabina Spielrein and Anna Freud deserve their place as matriarchs of the movement as...
well. Each woman made salient, but different contributions to psychoanalysis. Lou von Salome brought psychoanalysis to the arts through her fictional and biographical writings. Karen Horney questioned the patriarchal nature of the field and brought a feminine perspective through her construction of womb envy to counteract Freud's emphasis on penis envy. Sabina Spielrein contributed child language development from a psychoanalytic perspective and the death instinct. Anna Freud was the heir of psychoanalysis after her father's death in 1939 and a developer of child psychoanalysis. She also extended psychoanalytic concepts, making significant contributions to the fields of developmental psychology and early education. Further, each woman influenced Sigmund Freud in her own unique way.

**LOU VON SALOME (1861 TO 1937)**

Lou von Salome was born in St. Petersburg, Russia on February 12, 1861, the youngest child and only daughter of Gustav von Salome and Louise Wilm. The family lived in the heart of the city near the Romanov Winter Palace and spent their summers in Peterhof (Vickers, 2008). Lou experienced an amazing childhood. While both of her parents were of German descent, the family spoke several languages, including German, French, Russian and English. In fact, it was rumored that Lou's family spoke a specific language on certain days of the week. For example, on one day of the week the family might converse in German, but on another day they would interact in English (Etkind, 1997).

Despite Lou's peaceful childhood, she became enthralled by a minister when she was 17 years of age. Pastor Gillot was a stranger to her except that upon reading his sermons, she became enchanted with them. After writing to him, Pastor Gillot agreed to meet Lou. Gillot was the first of a series of unusual encounters with men that Lou experienced, culminating with her interactions with Freud in life. "Gillot loaded her down with lessons in philosophy, religion, history, Dutch and other subjects that he deemed important" (Etkind, 1997, p. 10). Lou was an eager student and learned quickly. Even though there was a 17-year age difference, Gillot decided to divorce his wife and marry von Salome; however, that never happened.

When Lou was 18 years old, her mother took her to Switzerland to attend the University of Zurich, one of the few places that admitted women at that time. When she was 21 years old, Lou and her mother traveled to Rome where Lou was introduced to Paul Ree and Friedrich Nietzsche. The three of them traveled throughout Europe, discussing possibilities of living together. Lou believed Nietzsche had fallen in love with her and some researchers believe Nietzsche asked Lou to marry him (Vickers, 2008). Lou entered a celibate marriage in 1887 with Friedrich Carl Andreas and remained with him until his death in 1930. However, during much of her married life Lou engaged in affairs with other famous men, the most notable of which was the poet, Rainer Maria Rilke. Although she was 15 years older, Lou and Rainer became lovers for many years and kept in touch until his untimely death. She has been described as Rilke's mentor and muse, introducing him to numerous people in the art and literary communities (Etkind, 1997).

Eventually Lou became interested in psychoanalysis and "wrote Freud requesting permission to attend the Third Congress in the autumn months of 1912. Freud replied that he considered her presence at his lectures a 'favorable omen'" (Vickers, 2008, p. 161). Freud had met Lou earlier and became fascinated by her charisma and charm. Lou began attending Freud's weekly seminars and became the center of Freud's attention during his lectures. On one occasion when Lou failed to attend, Freud later remarked, "I missed you at the lecture yesterday…I stared at the space that had been left for you" (Livingstone, 1984, p. 153).

As with many of the women contributors to psychoanalytic thought, Lou became part of the tension that developed between Freud and other men. Specifically, Lou decided to attend Alfred Adler's lectures in addition to Freud's lectures. Freud informed von Salome that he thought of Adler as a traitor. Further, Freud's inner circle had nothing to do with the defectors who joined Adler. Still, Freud acquiesced to Lou's interest in Adler's psychology and did not talk extensively with her about her interest in Adler's work. She also became involved in the rivalry between Victor Tausk and Freud. In addition, Tausk attended Freud's Wednesday lectures; however, Freud saw Tausk as a threat to psychoanalysis. Tausk was young and attractive and soon von Salome began an affair with Tausk. Again, Freud was so enamored with von Salome that he continued to receive Tausk in the inner circle, explaining to Lou that he allowed Tausk to continue only because of Lou's relationship with Tausk. Eventually Tausk committed suicide. Vickers (2008) reported that Freud finally "turned away from Tausk professionally and personally" and that "some have suggested [that Freud] may have taken away Tausk's last hope" (p. 179).

Lou von Salome made numerous contributions to psychoanalysis. She was able to link the similarities between the healthy and the neurotic person rather than focusing on the differences as Freud had. She saw the role of the ego as important in the development of neurosis, pointing out that conflict between the libido and the ego was a contributor. Lou also took a more holistic approach to psychoanalysis and believed that culture and human nature could work together and were not always in great conflict as Freud had suggested. Her approach to psychoanalysis was more positive and hopeful than Freud's. Lou even considered narcissism to have positive aspects (Livingstone, 1984). While Freud sometimes disagreed with von Salome's version of psychoanalysis,
he was always respectful of her ideas. Perhaps this was due partly to Lou's charisma, but also due to Lou's former relationship with Nietzsche. Freud often quoted Nietzsche and was interested in Lou's interpretation of Nietzsche's life and his philosophy. Perhaps Lou von Salome's greatest contribution to psychoanalysis was her fictional and biographical writings. She was a prominent leader in bringing psychoanalytic thought to the arts, particularly the literary arts (von Salome, 2003).

In summary, Lou von Salome's contributions to psychoanalysis included:

1) Similarities between the neurotic and healthy personality (Etkind, 1997)
2) The importance of the ego in the development of neurosis (Vickers, 2008)
3) The positive aspects of human personality (Livingstone, 1984)
4) A more holistic approach to personality that included cultural influences (Etkind, 1997)
5) Positive aspects of narcissism (Livingstone, 1984)
6) The introduction of psychoanalysis to the arts, especially literature (von Salome, 2003)

KAREN HORNEY (1885 TO 1952)

Karen Horney was born in Blankenese, Germany on December 15, 1885. Like von Salome, Horney was the youngest child in the family, born to Wackels Danielson and Sonni Ronzelen. Karen had an older brother named Berndt and four half brothers and sisters from her father's first marriage (Quinn, 1987). Wackels was a sea captain and was gone much of the time. Karen became close to her mother and her older brother. During childhood and throughout life, she suffered from bouts of depression (Rubins, 1978).

Karen began her college career at the University of Freiburg because it was one of the only universities in Europe that allow women in medical college. In 1908, Karen transferred to the University of Gottingen and later matriculated to the University of Berlin before she graduated in 1913 (Westkott, 1986). Karen married Oskar Horney in 1909. They had three daughters, including the Brigitte, with whom Karen had the closest relationship. Karen raised her children based on Freudian theory but later changed her ideas about child-rearing practices (Paris, 1994).

In the 1920s, Karen worked at the Institute for Psychoanalysis in Berlin and then immigrated with her daughters to the United States in 1930. Horney became the Associate Director of the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis. As she developed her own theories about personality and neurosis, she eventually separated from traditional Freudian psychoanalysis. In 1941, she became the Dean of the American Institute of Psychoanalysis and developed her own psychoanalytic school of thought. She also was the founder of the Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis (Paris, 1994).

Although Horney began her career as a classical Freudian psychoanalyst, she soon began to develop her own ideas, often contradicting Freudian theory. She is often described as the mother of feminine psychology; she presented papers and published articles that expounded innovative ideas regarding the development of personality in women. Early in her career she noted, “Psychoanalysis is the creation of a male genius and almost all those who have developed his ideas have been men. It is only right and reasonable that they should evolve more easily a masculine psychology and understand more of the development of men than of women” (Horney, 1967, p. 54).

Horney was especially critical of Freud’s notion of penis envy in women. While Freud continually pointed out the inferiority of women, because they lack a penis, Horney turned this hypothesis on its head and suggested that men are the inferior ones. She reported, “the man’s incapacity for motherhood is probably felt simply as an inferiority and can develop its full driving power without inhibition” (Horney, 1967, p. 62). Horney explained that it is just as likely that men have womb envy as women would have penis envy because it is women who are able to bring life into the world. To Horney, men compensate for their inability to produce life through the womb by their excessive efforts to be productive in the world of work (Paris, 1994).

As with Lou von Salome's beliefs about psychoanalysis, Karen Horney's views were more comprehensive and less fatalistic than Freud's ideas. Specifically, she believed that the role of culture was a predominant factor in the development of personality, not just biological drives as Freud expounded. Even with neurosis, she believed it had a positive goal—to make life more palatable (Quinn, 1987). Over time, she developed her own theory of neurosis. According to Horney, “there are four principal ways in which people try to protect themselves: affection, submissiveness, power, withdrawal” (Paris, 1994, p. 106). Consequently, individuals incorporate three possible coping strategies in approaching the world. These are compliance, aggression and withdrawal (Horney, 1937).

Compliance is a strategy in which an individual tries to please others. Horney called this a moving-toward strategy. A person who uses this strategy has a strong desire to be liked and tries to accomplish this through people pleasing behaviors. Aggression is the second strategy. This type of individual develops a moving-against strategy to cope with others. The need for power and control drive this type of person. The third strategy is withdrawal. An individual who uses withdrawal incorporates moving-away from others in an attempt to be self-reliant. Horney also explained that some individuals develop submissiveness, as well, to cope with
others. Horney explained that there are two drives that are the most important in the development of neuroses; they are the need for affection and the desire for control or power (Horney, 1937).

Karen Horney and Alfred Adler left the Freudian camp and developed what many refer to as the Neo-Freudian discipline. While von Salome had been interested in Adler's ideas, Horney, together with Adler, assembled a group of Neo-Freudians. This group included Eric Fromm, with whom Horney had a relationship. Horney, along with Adler and Fromm are described as "dissenters" in Paul Roazen's (1992) *Freud and His Followers*. Because of her emphasis on cultural and societal influences on personality, Horney was often called a social psychoanalyst.

Horney contributed many new ideas and theories to psychoanalysis. These included:

1) Founded feminine or feminist psychology (Horney, 1967)
2) Developed the theory of neurotic needs, describing methods people employ in coping with neurosis (Horney, 1937)
3) Founded the American Journal of Psychoanalysis (Roazen, 1992)
4) Founded the Neo-Freudian School along with Adler and others (Quinn, 1987)
5) Researched and described the nature of narcissism (Horney, 1950)
6) Described womb envy in men as a counter to Freud's penis envy (Horney, 1967)
7) Developed a more holistic, humanistic view than Freud of the human psyche (Horney, 1950)
8) Presented the first published papers on feminine psychiatry (Horney, 1967)
9) Developed one of the first self-help books entitled *Are You Considering Psychoanalysis?* (Horney, 1946)
10) Inspired the development of the Karen Horney Clinic in New York City (Quinn, 1987)
11) Revised and summarized her ideas about neurosis, expanding her ideas concerning neurotic solutions in Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle toward Self-Realization (Horney, 1950)

**SABINA SPIELREIN (1885 TO 1942)**

Sabina Spielrein was born in Rostov-on-the-Don, Russia in 1885 to a wealthy Jewish family. Unlike von Salome and Horney, Spielrein was the oldest child, having "three younger brothers: Isaac, Jan and Emile. All of the Spielrein children received formidable educations in Europe and became professors during the Soviet period" (Etkind, 1997, p. 132). Sabina also had a younger sister, Emilia, who died early in life of typhoid fever (Aldridge, 2009). Very little is known about Sabina's childhood until her admittance to the Burgholzli Hospital, near Zurich, Switzerland on August 17, 1904, where she became Carl Jung's first patient (Kerr, 1993).

According to Covington (2003), “Sabina Spielrein is perhaps best known for her love affair with Carl Jung. While it is debatable whether their relationship was actually consummated, it bore fruit for them both in giving rise to psychological insights and discoveries that were to become the basis for fundamental theoretical concepts in psychoanalysis and analytical psychology” (p. 1). These include the death instinct, counter transference and the anima (Covington, 2003). Unfortunately, Spielrein's role in these contributions “to the early development of psychoanalysis have been overlooked and until recently was mainly forgotten” (Hall, 2005, p. 1).

In June of 1905, Spielrein was released from Burgholzli. She had already begun her study of medicine at the University of Zurich at that time (Aldridge and Christensen, 2013). After her involvement with Jung, Sabina turned to Sigmund Freud for advice and counsel (Kerr, 1993). As with many of the women associated with Freud, there was a triangular conflict involving another man. In this case, the other man was Carl Jung. In fact, Jung and Freud split supposedly over ideological issues; however, some researchers believe Spielrein's relationship with both men was a catalyst to the inevitable Freud and Jung split (Kerr, 1993). Spielrein requested to see Freud in 1909, but Freud rejected her request because Jung and Freud had been corresponding about Jung's relationship with Spielrein. She eventually traveled to Vienna and met Freud personally in 1911. According to Hall (2005), “He was greatly impressed with her” (p. 2).

In 1911, Sabina Spielrein received her doctoral degree in medicine (Spielrein, 1911). According to Hall (2005), her dissertation, entitled "Concerning the Psychological Content of a Case of Schizophrenia," was the "first dissertation written by a woman that was psychoanalytically oriented" (p. 2). Sabina soon became the second woman doctor who was active in the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, presenting papers and attending the weekly meetings of the group (Hall, 2005: Kerr, 1993).

In 1912, Sabina married Pavel Scheftele, a Russian doctor and in 1913 they had a daughter named Renata. This was about the time that Jung and Freud departed ways. Still, Spielrein continued to correspond with Jung until 1919 and with Freud until 1923 (Hall, 2005). From 1920 to 1923, Spielrein worked at the Jean-Jacques Rousseau Institute in Geneva, Switzerland, where she became Jean Piaget's psychoanalyst. She also contributed to his ideas on child language and thought (Aldridge and Christensen, 2013). Spielrein and Piaget were both researching child language and thought and considered collaborating (Covington and Wharton, 2003). In 1923, Spielrein returned to Russia and Piaget's research appeared to have changed quite suddenly from language to cognitive and moral development. Although Piaget lived until 1980 and continued a rigorous research
agenda, he abandoned his study of childhood language after his colleague, Sabina Spielrein, left Switzerland (Aldridge and Christensen, 2013).

Upon returning to Russia, Spielrein joined the Russian Psychoanalytic Society, “which had recently been created by Luria and of which Vygotsky was also a member” (Santiogi-Delefoss and Delefoss, 2002, p. 723). What is remarkable is that of the major psychologists of the 20th century, Spielrein worked closely with five of them (Kerr, 1993). While Spielrein was Jung’s patient and Freud served for a short time as her mentor, she was a colleague and psychoanalyst of Piaget. Her role with Vygotsky and Luria when she returned to Russia was more or less that of a mentor for these two men (Kerr, 1993). In fact, Santiago-Delefoss and Delefoss (2002) concluded, “…although Spielrein’s work is rarely quoted, it has inspired several important lines of thought in psychology and language sciences (not only Piaget and Vygotsky, but Freud, Jakobson, and Leontiev as well)” (p. 724). There is limited information about Sabina Spielrein’s life after she returned to Russia as compared to her years in Switzerland and Germany. She worked for the State Psychoanalytic Institute and assisted in overseeing the work of the Russian Psychoanalytic Society (Carotenuto, 1982). At one time, she actually had “three jobs from September 23 on: as a researcher at the State Psychoanalytic Institute, as a doctor and pedologist in a village called Third International, and as chair of the child psychology division at the First Moscow University” (Etkind, 1997, p. 171). A year after Sabina returned to Russia she moved back to Rostov-on-the-Don where she was reunited with Pavel Schefftel, her husband. They had a second daughter named Eva. During the 1930s, the family lived in a three-room dwelling. “In 1937, Pavel Schefftel died of a heart attack” (Etkind, 1997, p. 176). And, in August of 1942, Sabina Spielrein and her daughters, Renata and Eva, were executed along with many other Jews at a synagogue in Rostov (Kerr, 1993).

Like Lou von Salome and Karen Horney, Sabina Spielrein contributed much to psychoanalysis. Some of her contributions included:

1) An explanation of the death instinct (Spielrein, 1912)
2) The definition and beliefs about transference and countertransference (Kerr, 1993)
3) Explorations into the nature of eros (Carotenuto, 1982)
4) The discovery of the anima (Covington and Wharton, 2003)
5) The development of language in children (Spielrein, 2003)
6) The development of language in individuals with schizophrenia (Etkind, 1997)

ANNA FREUD (1895 TO 1982)

Anna Freud was born in Vienna, Austria on December 3, 1895, the youngest of Martha Bernays’ and Sigmund Freud’s six children. The Freud children were divided into two groups. The older children were Mathilde, Martin and Oliver. The younger children were Enst, Sophie and Anna (M. Freud, 1964). “For Anna Freud, Sophie was the most difficult sibling, the focus of her jealously” (Young-Bruehl, 2008, p. 45). Sophie was quite beautiful, while Anna was considered smart. The sisters developed separate roles; Sophie was the beauty of the family while Anna had the brains (Coles, 1992).

Josefine Cihlarz was hired as a caregiver when Anna was born. She provided care for Anna and the three youngest children. Even though Martha Freud’s sister, Minna, had come to live with the Freuds shortly after Anna’s birth, neither Martha nor Minna had the role that Josefine acquired as the “psychological mother.” “Josefine cared for the little children at home and for all on their daily walks in the public parks around Ringstrasse” (Young-Bruehl, 2008, p. 32). Anna Freud and her father were quite close. He included one of Anna’s dreams, from when she was only 18 months old, in the book, The Interpretation of Dreams (S. Freud, 1899). Throughout Anna’s life, she and her father remained exceptionally close. During the early 1900s, it was not uncommon for the youngest daughter to live at home and take care of the aging parents. This eventually became Anna’s role (Peters, 1985).

Anna Freud was taught in elementary school by traditional methods in which rote memorization was used. She learned Hebrew the same way. She was taught the words but not what they meant. Later, in her own work with children, Anna used her experience to describe how not to work with children. Despite the inappropriate methods that were used to teach her, Anna developed a love for reading and writing, as well as weaving and knitting. Anna’s preferences in reading were for non-fiction or realistic fiction and not stories that involved unrealistic fantasy (Young-Bruehl, 2008).

As a young woman, Anna became a teacher from 1917 to 1920, after her training period which began in 1915. She left teaching because of illness. By this time, Anna had already begun psychoanalysis with her father. Sigmund Freud served as her psychoanalyst from 1918 to 1922 and by this time, she was already involved in the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. She began presenting papers to the Society. The first paper she presented was entitled, “Beating Fantasies and Daydreams” (Coles, 1992). She started her own practice of psychoanalysis with children in 1923. She later began teaching at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Training Institute on methods of child analysis. By 1935 she was director of the Institute (Young-Bruehl, 2008). One of her major contributions to psychoanalysis during this time as her work on defense mechanisms, published in The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense (A. Freud, 1936).

In 1938, the Freud family moved to London because of the war. Anna was in charge of all of the logistics of the
family move because Sigmund Freud’s health had deteriorated due to his lengthy fight with cancer. Anna was the family caregiver in London and nursed her father through his death in 1939 (Peters, 1985). In London, Anna Freud opened the Hampstead War Nursery for young children who were victims of the war. Anna’s program of treatment included a focus on attachment and continuity of the children’s experiences through foster care. She continued this work after World War II at the Bulldogs Bank Home, an orphanage run by Anna’s friends. During this time Anna also developed a long-term relationship with Dorothy Burlingham-Tiffany. Together they published many studies on children in crisis and emphasized how young children develop attachments among caregivers and peers when parents are not available (Freud and Burlingham, 1944).

Anna Freud visited, lectured and taught short courses in the United States from the 1950s until her death in 1982. She also published many research studies and books during this time. Her writings have been collected into eight volumes entitled, The Writings of Anna Freud. Anna Freud made arrangements before her death in 1982 to turn her London house into a museum dedicated to the works of her father, despite the fact that he lived there for only a year while she had been a resident for decades (Peters, 1985).

Anna Freud made extensive contributions to psychoanalysis, many of which have been attributed to her father (Aldridge and Christensen, 2013). She and Melanie Klein are considered the mothers of child psychoanalysis (Young-Bruehl, 2008). The following is a summary of many of the additions that Anna Freud made to the field of psychoanalysis:

1) Pioneered the area of child psychoanalysis, along with Melanie Klein (Freud, 1965)
2) Pioneered the area of ego psychology, expounding the defense mechanisms, even though her father is attributed with the development of defense mechanisms (Freud, 1936)
3) Developed a comprehensive developmental theory that includes basic drives and object relations (Freud, 1965)
4) Organized prominent researchers and child psychoanalysts to study personality development and deviations that included Margaret Mahler and Erik Erikson (Young-Bruehl, 2008)
5) Catalogued the normal and exceptional development of later childhood and adolescence (Edgcumbe, 2000)
6) Helped develop a continuum and scale from self-reliance to emotional dependency in children and adults (Edgcumbe, 2000)
7) Explained the importance of parents and caregivers in the psychological development of children (Freud and Burlingham, 1944)
8) Extended the knowledge base of childhood development for numerous professions including psychology, education, social work, sociology and human ecology (Freud, 1930)
9) Developed a comprehensive view of psychoanalysis that included environmental and cultural factors as well as biological drives (Freud, 1965)

DISCUSSION

Lou von Salome, Karen Horney, Sabina Spielrein and Anna Freud each had important connections with Sigmund Freud. From the story of each matriarch, we learn much about the relationship patterns Freud had with both women and men of psychoanalysis. Lou von Salome was perhaps the most revered woman in Freud’s life. Everything on or near Sigmund Freud’s desk in his London home in the Hampstead is exactly as he left it. There is a statue of the Sphinx, another of the Goddess Athena and finally a framed picture of Lou von Salome. “He kept it on his desk, he told her, for inspiration” (Vickers, 2008, p. 158). From the beginning of their relationship, Freud was allured, like all the men who met Lou, by her independence, unconventional ways and charm. Freud often quoted Nietzsche and was interested in Lou’s understanding of him.

Many of Lou von Salome’s ideas about psychoanalysis ran contrary to Freud’s classical approach. Still, Freud was always respectful of Lou’s contributions and accepted her into his inner circle, unlike others who contradicted him. For some reason, he did not think of Lou as a traitor, as he did others who were interested in Adler’s ideas. And, he allowed Victor Tausk to remain in his group because of von Salome’s relationship to Victor. Although the relationship between Lou and Sigmund was one of great respect, it is quite clear that their relationship was strictly platonic (Vickers, 2008). Finally, Lou and Sigmund remained friends until Lou died in 1937. The evidence of this intense friendship was catalogued in the letters between Lou and Sigmund. Pfieffer (1966) published the letters between von Salome and Freud from September 27, 1912 through May 6, 1936.

The relationship between Karen Horney and Sigmund Freud was not a personal one as was the case with the other three matriarchs described here. We do know that she began her career as a disciple of Freud. According to Roazen (1992), Karen was the analysand of Hans Sachs. She was also analyzed by Karl Abraham (Paris, 1994). Both Sachs and Abraham were part of Freud’s secret society. “Sachs was named, along with Otto Rank, Sandor Ferenczi, Karl Abraham, and Ernest Jones, to a secret committee founded by Freud before World War I (after the loss of Adler, Jung and Stekel) to forward the cause” (Roazen, 1992, p. 323). Despite this close connection between Karen Horney and two of Freud’s secret committee members, Horney “had no personal relationship with Freud” (Roazen, 1992, p. 510).
Sabina Spielrein’s relationship with Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung has been the subject of several publications including A Secret Symmetry: Sabina Spielrein Between Jung and Freud—the Untold Story of the Woman who Changed the Early History of Psychoanalysis (Caratenuto, 1982) and A Most Dangerous Method: The Story of Jung, Freud and Sabina Spielrein (Kerr, 1993) and the 2011 movie, A Dangerous Method, based on Kerr’s book. Of the four matriarchs reported here, Spielrein appears to have received the shortest shrift of all of them. Her influence in the early days of psychoanalysis was profound, but until recently few people had ever heard of her. According to Hall (2005), Spielrein “was a major figure in the development of the psychoanalytic movement—and a rare woman in that field. Her thought and work had significant impact on the theories Jung and Freud developed” (p. 4). Although Spielrein’s experience with Freud was vastly different from von Salome’s, Spielrein’s relationship with Freud showed his pattern of how women acted as a catalyst for his conflicts with other men.

Volumes could be written about Anna Freud’s relationship with her father. We began this article with Freud’s contempt for women, as expressed in his paper, “Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction between the sexes” (Freud, 1925). What is most interesting to note is the fact that Anna Freud delivered this paper for her father at the International Psycho-Analytical Congress in Hamburg, Germany on September 3, 1925 (Young-Bruehl, 2008).

Anna Freud should be recognized for her explanation of defense mechanisms that she expounded in The Ego and Mechanisms of Defense (Freud, 1936). However, almost all of the introductory texts in general psychology, developmental psychology and human development credit her father with these, never mentioning her name. In fact, Anna is rarely, if ever, mentioned in courses that use these texts. If she is mentioned, she is reported as a neo-Freudian, along with Alfred Adler, Karen Horney, Eric From and Erik Erikson. Further, Anna is the one who studied and worked with children for decades, first as a school teacher and then as the co-developer of child psychoanalysis. Still, Sigmund Freud’s work is explained in child psychology and child development texts, while Anna’s contributions are rarely, if ever, mentioned.

Despite all of this, Anna was completely devoted to her father and his legacy. As previously noted, she is responsible for her London home becoming a Sigmund Freud museum. In spite of all her knowledge of psychoanalysis and children, Anna Freud lived out the archetype of the youngest daughter during the early 1900s. She never married, becoming the caregiver for her father until the day he died (Roazen, 1992). So why has Anna Freud not been noted for her contributions to child psychology, when her father is constantly at the forefront? Aldridge and Christensen (2013) have suggested that “there is evidence that Anna Freud’s devotion to her father may have resulted in hegemony on the part of Ms. Freud. Anna was devoted to preserving her father’s work and legacy” (p. 103). They go on to explain, “In all of her research, she always referred to her father’s theories when, in fact, many of them were her own inventions” (p. 103). Roazen (1992) remarked that Anna’s “relationship with her father deprived her of what is conventionally thought of as a full life” (p. 452).

Another question is what relationship did these four matriarchs have with one another? There is little doubt that Lou von Salome, Karen Horney, Sabina Spielrein and Anna Freud were acquainted with each other through Sigmund Freud and through their own work in psychoanalysis. The most notable relationship was between Lou and Anna. Their connection was quite remarkable. Sigmund introduced Anna to Lou when Anna was an adolescent. They developed a bond that lasted many years. During Anna’s early life, her favorite volume of poetry was written by Rainer Rilke, one of von Salome’s lovers (Young-Bruehl, 2008).

As a child, Anna went mushroom picking with her dad. Many years later, “Anna Freud reminisced about their mushroom-picking expeditions to her friend and confidante Lou Andreas-Salome, who committed the description to her journal” (Young-Bruehl, 2008, p. 36). There are also rumors about the role Lou played in Anna’s life. For example, “one of the well-established legends among Freud’s pupils was that Lou Andreas-Salome was Anna Freud’s analyst” (Roazen, 1992, p. 438). Roazen goes on to say, “Lou and Anna became great friends in later years and Lou dedicated one of her books to her” (p. 438). Lou von Salome, Karen Horney, Sabina Spielrein, and Anna Freud contributed much to the field of psychoanalysis during a time when views on women were even more oppressive than they are today. According to Roazen (1992), Freud “could not conceive of a woman as a competitor. He had great success in keeping women in a dependent relationship to him and he admired his female pupils” (p. 469). Each matriarch of psychoanalysis described here extended the ideas and theories of Sigmund Freud, but they were not given the credit they deserved, perhaps because of the times in which they lived. We are now well into the 21st century. It is time the matriarchal contributors of psychoanalysis are given their proper dues and their works should be given considerable attention, along with those of Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung and Alfred Adler.

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) have not declared any conflict of interests.

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